THE BULLETIN OF

The Institute of Child Study

Vol. 18, No. 4 (71) December, 1956

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

$1.00 per year Single copies, 25 cents

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Chicago 11

THE BULLETIN OF THE INSTITUTE OF CHILD STUDY is published four times a year at 45 Walmer Road, Toronto, under the direction of an editorial committee of the Institute of Child Study at the University of Toronto.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single subscriptions, $1.00 per year.

Please make cheques payable to the University of Toronto and add bank exchange to out-of-town cheques.

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The writing, editing, and secretarial work on THE BULLETIN are part of the defined activities of staff members of The Institute of Child Study and as such are financed through the Federal Health Grant project 605–5–147.

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Editorial Comment

THIS number of the BULLETIN presents several articles dealing with children in the school. We feel sure that these will be of interest to both parents and teachers. We no longer think of the home and the school as being separate and distinct. Rather we think of them as two institutions working towards the same goal, the guidance of the child towards happy, effective adulthood. Nor is there a sharp division of labour. Of course the school accepts the responsibility for the development of intellectual skills and the accumulation of knowledge. But the modern school is also concerned with the total development of the child. Thus home and school, parents and teachers, form a team working together for the good of the child.

In the Institute, from the nursery school and on through the kindergarten and the grades, the focus is on *children* rather than on subject matter. This does not mean that reading, writing, and arithmetic are not important. But it does mean that intellectual achievement is placed in a total context of emotional, social, and personality development.

It is a thrilling experience to visit a classroom in a modern school like the Institute. There is an air of busy interest and informality that is in sharp contrast to the atmosphere of formality and strain that I associate with my own early school days many years ago. One can feel the friendly spirit of co-operation as teacher and children share their experiences. Somehow over the years teacher has changed from the task master to the mentor and guide and even friend of the children.

There are a number of items of common knowledge that the modern school is making a serious attempt to incorporate into its program. Some of these are: each child is an unique individual; self motivation is more effective than artificial stimulation; interest and curiosity are the starting points for the effort that educates; the "whole" child goes to school.

Miss Morrison's extremely interesting article shows how some of these ideas are put into operation in the kindergarten. Here we can see how it is possible to balance the claims of the individual and the necessities of group activity. And here we can see, also, how all aspects of individual development are taken into account as the attempt is made to have the

child ready for the different but not more serious kinds of learning that he will meet in Grade One.

The importance of individual differences and the necessity of considering the whole child are further emphasized in Mrs. Warburton's vivid and entertaining account of children in Grade One. One can hardly help but say "How fortunate children are to-day, as they start in on the great adventure of discovery and learning, to have such sympathetic and understanding people for teachers." Again I can not help but contrast this with my memory of the day I had too many mistakes in spelling and was subjected to the indignity of a strapping to "help my learning." Perhaps that strapping was why I learned to hate spelling and why I am so poor a speller today.

Miss Weld and Mrs. Daly add another charming touch to this picture of modern education. Maybe the study of French will be considered a frill in early education by some people but, as the authors point out, we are, after all, a bilingual country. Perhaps I wouldn't feel so lost in Quebec or in Paris if I had been born a little later and been a child in these classes.

Some people have expressed the concern that modern education is too "soft" and does not demand enough of children. They wonder whether the child will be able to handle the hard and serious facts of living if we make the classroom too pleasant and interesting. However we must also remember that when a child finds learning thrilling and satisfying he will continue to learn, but that if he finds learning a strain and a burden he will look forward to the day when the law will release him from school and he need learn no longer.

The changes that have taken place and are taking place in our schools are not good merely because they are changes. They must be evaluated in terms of results and such evaluation must not be made in too narrow terms. If educational methods and procedures aid the child in becoming a self-disciplined, thoughtful, effective person, we are justified in calling them good. If they succeed in establishing a passing grade but also leave the child with less curiosity, less desire to find out, and less skill in managing himself, then our evaluation must be that the methods used are not adequate. Parents, teachers, and all who are interested in children and an improved world look to education as the key to many of our pressing social problems. That is why we cannot place too much emphasis on the need for continued thoughtful evaluation of what goes on in the two great educational institutions, the home and the school.

KARL S. BERNHARDT

"Ready or Not?"

FLORA M. MORRISON*

MOST teachers realize the psychological importance of children's individual differences; their difficulty is in taking sufficient account of these in a busy classroom where many children are to be cared for and at the same time taught. This article describes some of the things we have done in our kindergarten to meet the needs of the individual child, while at the same time maintaining group organization.

Our kindergarten is somewhat different from that in the usual elementary school. What we suggest may have to be adapted for use in other situations. Ours is a small kindergarten of twenty-five children, most of whom have attended nursery school. The kindergarten is well-equipped with all the necessary materials, has adequate space, and is staffed by the writer and a part-time assistant. In addition, Institute students do part of their practice training with us, and on many other days we are visited by the people who have come to see the Institute. Our kindergarten day is longer than most. The children arrive between 8:30 and 9:00 and stay through lunch for sleep and an outdoor play period in the afternoon, leaving at about 2:30.

Our kindergarten offers a variety of opportunities, tasks and activities. We try to decide whether each child is *ready or not* for each of these, and to make our requirements for the group so flexible that they can be adapted to meet the various "readinesses" of each child.

Quite often, parents ask me, "Why should Johnny go to kindergarten? He has been to nursery school for two years. He can write his name and even read many of the highway signs. In kindergarten he seems to be doing just the same thing." One can understand how parents glancing at the kindergarten in September may well feel this way. It looks like nursery school. The toys are there, very much the same as those the child has been using for two years; there are the familiar easels and paints and plasticene and crayons, and there are no rows of desks at which he can work at his three R's, and which make a room look like school. Nothing here looks like school! It seems very informal and as if it were going to be just another year of play.

It is probably a good thing if a child can write his name and read highway signs when he comes to kindergarten; but perhaps so much emphasis has been put on "reading readiness" that we have forgotten

*Miss Morrison is the kindergarten teacher at the Institute of Child Study.

there are other "readinesses" which are equally important for the child's growth. Before he is ready for the experience of a formal teaching situation, he must have grown in many ways and when we look at a group of children entering kindergarten, we see immediately that there is a wide variation in the extent to which they are ready or not to meet the other requirements which make it possible to live constructively in the formal school situation. Some children are more ready to accept responsibility than others. Some are more adept in reacting to the children and adults about them. Some know better than others when they must conform to a pattern and when they may set their own goals. Some can concentrate on a task much longer than others. In kindergarten each child must be helped to acquire these things according to his degree of readiness for them. What is right for one child may not be right for another, so there must be flexibility in the program and time for individual assistance. At the end of the year we hope each child will be ready for Grade I. However, we do not set a single readiness standard for our class. Each child is different and so must be judged on his own unique "readiness pattern" for Grade I.

In our kindergarten all the children are "well children,"* but, of course, they show a tremendous amount of variation in the degree to which they have developed in different aspects of living. At this age, there is an unevenness in development, some children being far ahead in certain things and lagging in others. I am going to describe two youngsters who were in our kindergarten, both well children, each with his own advances and lags in development. I shall discuss how we helped each according to his needs during the year, and then try to show how our whole kindergarten is organized so that the program can include the Janes, and the Alans, along with the other twenty-three children.

Jane Learns to Make Friends

Jane was a very bright little girl who had a great fund of general knowledge and was more than ready in reading and writing and in conversation with adults as expected at the kindergarten level. Her paintings and drawings were meaningful and held unusual detail for a five-year-old. She quickly learned to follow the day's program and apparently accepted it completely. She could look after herself efficiently in routine situations and her degree of concentration was remarkable. However, unlike many of the youngsters, Jane had not been to school before and had usually played with children older than herself. Perhaps the association had not worked too well because she said that children were

**Well Children*—a progress report on the research conducted at The Institute of Child Study, University of Toronto, July, 1953, to December, 1955.

usually mean to her. It became apparent that she had not learned the arts of playing with children of her own age. She had little in common with the girls, and some of the boys really frightened her. She much preferred to spend her time talking with the teacher.

We tried to help Jane to become more ready for life with her contemporaries. At dinnertime she sat with a teacher and a small group of children and joined a small, specially chosen group for creative activities. We tried to find small situations where she could contribute something useful to the work of the other children. It took a long time before results began to appear, for Jane was really happiest working away by herself or discussing adult matters with the teacher. Outdoor play was the most difficult situation to plan, for there all the children are busy with group activities of their own choosing. Jane found the swing a safe place to watch and to wonder at the agile climbing, the swift running which went on around her. Of course, no correction or criticism was ever necessary because Jane was never naughty. She was, indeed, an alert and admirable pupil and would have been a great blessing for a teacher who was overly busy with a large group. Actually, Jane was not yet ready for criticism and it was fortunate that at the beginning there was so little need to give it.

Jane spent a long time watching the other children. Then she began to make some overtures; and, of course, she started in the way almost every child does—poking and tickling and pushing any child who happened to be nearby, things which most five-year-olds no longer do. Since Jane talked easily to me and was an eager learner, I simply discussed the situation with her and she could see that this was not the best way to play in kindergarten. After a while, she tried a new method. She offered to help some of the girls with their drawings. This resulted in a collection of artistic efforts which had rather a copied look, but it did not harm the work of the other children as they were already enjoying being original. For Jane it was a wonderful experience; she had found a way of being accepted by a group of girls in her class.

It was a long time before Jane chose a friend. She went at it rather deliberately. One by one she tried out different children, being with them constantly several days at a time and trying to get to know them. At first she complied with their desires but eventually she felt secure enough to impose her will on them. Her methods of arranging her social life were systematic and well-planned. One day she wanted to play with Betty who nearly always had Arthur at her side. Jane laid a large piece of paper on the table, brought out the paints and three brushes and then invited Betty to come and make a picture with her; and she added, "Arthur, you can paint on this part of the paper too, if you would like

to." This was well thought out, for Betty's skill in painting was high in comparison with Arthur's. He was apt to spoil the work of other children. Jane had come a long way in her social development in being able to organize a group of three when two of the children were friends of long standing. The trio played together outdoors, rushing to get a piece of equipment which three people could use. Jane learned a lot from her association with these two great little teachers. She laughed and giggled as she had never done before. Incidentally, she had to learn to confine her hilarity to appropriate times and places and this gave her the opportunity to experience a little simple discipline. By this time, she was secure enough to be able to take the necessary mild direction. However, it was interesting that later Jane said she thought she wouldn't play with Betty and Arthur any more because they made her naughty. When she admitted that she did like playing with them, I asked her if she'd like me to help her work things out. I then spent a little extra time with the group and helped them to get down to constructive work together so that Jane became able to use her advanced skills to contribute to their enjoyment.

By this time, Jane had tried out being friends with all the girls and, in addition to her fun as a member of the trio, she was able to enjoy activities with the other children. She found she could use her advanced reading to add to their enjoyment. Thus, Jane's life in kindergarten did not mean pushing ahead in academic work in which she was already advanced, though opportunities *were* found to use her academic skill. Instead, the emphasis was on gradually becoming ready for a great many other things that took time and effort to learn.

Alan Learns to Take Responsibility

Alan was more than ready for kindergarten in sheer physical size. He had a special kind of childlike charm which can be very appealing to adults. Because of his nursery school experience, he was ready for creative handwork. He also enjoyed music. However, he was not quite ready for kindergarten in his speech, nor in his control over his excitability and roughness. Also, he could not remember to persist in those situations which take concentration and a considerable degree of responsibility. Getting dressed was difficult for him, so we arranged for him to start putting on his outdoor clothes before the other children. The teacher was nearby to encourage and help him. When he was managing his dressing more easily, we worked with him through the next situation of difficulty and so on. Leaving Alan to manage things for himself meant that he got into difficulties regularly and had to be reminded or sent off to do the job alone, thus failing repeatedly. By giving him individual help, these

failures were reduced. He worked hard with us in order to be able to return to the group. Feeling more effective, he would become ready for the next responsibility.

Alan did his best work in small groups, and here his love of making things contributed to the project. He liked to be helpful and when asked to serve the tomato juice, made a tremendous effort to serve it carefully. He also liked to change the date on the calendar. He took these responsibilities very seriously. One day I discovered him going back to the room just before dismissal and putting the date up for the next day. These duties meant a great deal to him.

Although Alan had difficulty with words, when music was played he moved about the room with amazing grace and freedom. Often when he seemed to be restless and tense, we would play a classical record and he would gradually calm down sufficiently to carry on with the group. He liked to operate the record player and learned to do this with utmost care. By going along slowly with Alan, he gradually learned to take the responsibility that was necessary before he was completely ready to go on to Grade I.

A Program with a Place for Every Child

In describing Jane and Alan, it appears that a great deal of time must be given to each child—yet there are twenty-five of them. The crux of the matter is that the program must be arranged in such a way that time can be given to a child when he needs it, and that a teacher has time to give the particular kind of help that each child needs. In working out our program to achieve this goal, here are some of the things which we consider important.

There is plenty of time when the children arrive in the morning so that each has the opportunity of a chat with the teacher. As we do not ring a school bell to call the children in, they arrive over a period of forty-five minutes. This is when the teacher may help a child to start on some new project, or she may discover that he is tired and needs a quiet day and a special program.

There is a place for a formal group in this kind of program. We have it in the early part of the morning. Here the children learn to listen to the teacher or to their classmates and to contribute their ideas to the conversation. The children discover that each must take his turn in talking, because all can't be heard at the same time. This is the time for discussing all kinds of information, plans for the day and, occasionally, rules of outdoor play. It may be during this period that Jane presents something she would like to read, thus making use of her special skill; or it may be that if the date is a small number, Alan will be able to

change the calendar. If it is a large number, perhaps someone else offers to try to find it. During this period, there is an opportunity for each child to show some thing in which he is especially interested. He may be so enthusiastic that he tells the whole group about it without knowing that this is his beginning of public speaking; and, of course, it is thrilling for every youngster to have the others ask questions about his special interests. This is a time when reading readiness has a very important place. One child may be able to describe the weather accurately, but it may be another who can match the words, "It is raining," with the picture on the board. Too, during this time, the teacher brings in new material as she feels the children are ready for it. It is the time for talking a bit in French, or for acting out some familiar incident, and for music or stories.

The period of concentrated group attention is short at the beginning of the year and increases as the time goes on and the children grow. Sometimes alternate activities are arranged for the child who is unable to sit and listen for as long as the rest of the group. Of course, these "formal" groups occur at other times of the day, but the early morning period is perhaps the most concentrated.

Then there are periods of freer choice activity when the children work at tables or on the floor. They may work individually or in groups; both are important. There is usually a buzz of conversation which ensures that both language and social development are going forward. These blend particularly well when a project is being planned. The informal work room gives the teacher a chance to give individual help and to observe in what way the children go ahead working on their own. She can move about the room to encourage the efforts of one, or to show something new to another.

Jimmy was a boy who became easily discouraged with his work; after a few crayon marks on a paper, he would throw it into the wastebasket. He needed a great deal of encouragement to go ahead with his work before he began to realize that it was worthwhile. It was a triumphant day when, during a group project, he found that his wobbly little tree had an important place with the animals and birds in the picture of a forest. Alex needed a different kind of guidance with his work. He had high ambitions and a quick mind but poor muscle co-ordination. He was always planning something too difficult. He would become tense and angry when his cow wouldn't turn out to look like a cow, or his aeroplane wouldn't fly. Alex had to learn that a perfect product was not the most important thing; at the same time he needed to gradually improve his skill by doing work which was within his ability. We helped him here by providing large pieces of paper and replacing the small pencils with

extra-size crayons or paint brushes. He gained satisfaction from colour and design so that his desire to make tiny figures died out for a while. Later, his skills developed sufficiently to allow him to do these with ease. Only then was he ready to start writing, which was one of his ambitions. It is well-known that it is necessary to have an all-round development before fine hand work can be started. Sometimes, parents as well as children are unaware of this.

Activity in the playroom is varied; sometimes it is according to individual choice and sometimes the teacher arranges a more formal group. Most of the time creative materials are used, but to go forward, children must often go back. Hence, familiar toys from nursery days are conveniently available in kindergarten. The youngsters perhaps find a comfort in returning to toys they have played with before, and out of this often comes a new use of these familiar objects in dramatic play. There is also a variety of more challenging toys. The enthusiasm of social activity and learning to play and work in a group can be quite tiring to the young child. Hence, relaxation and periods of quiet activity are introduced during the day. Some children need more quiet times than others, just as some children need more sleep.

In outdoor play, the Janes and Alans and all the other children can enjoy themselves at their own stage of readiness. The child who is most advanced at indoor creative work may be the one who is least ready for rambunctious outdoor activity. With plenty of equipment, every child has a chance to run and climb. This type of activity is necessary for developing the larger muscles and provides an outlet for the exuberance found in five-year-old children.

In routine situations such as washing, dressing, eating, a minimum standard of performance is required of our kindergarten children. For example, at meal-time, we expect them to eat in a manner which is acceptable for five-year-olds. From this minimum standard, children vary in their capacity for politeness and also in their ability to converse and eat at the same moment. Conversation increases during the year, but some children are not nearly as ready for combining talking and eating as others.

At the time children come to kindergarten, there is an unevenness in each aspect of their development. Their readinesses are different because each child is different. There can be no common level of readiness. Furthermore, neither Jane's reading nor Alan's cuteness nor Alex's ambition to write makes a ready child. It is a *ready child* rather than a *ready skill* that we hope to develop. We have tried to describe our attempts in our own kindergarten to do so.

On the Threshold—Grade I

MARJORY E. WARBURTON*

FROM the very first day in school, six-year-old children impress one with their differences in personality and capabilities. Even the way each child makes his entrance is unique. Anne enters, eyes aglow. She pauses momentarily in the doorway and then in a loud voice calls, "Hi, everybody!" and runs to her seat, touching each child lightly on the arm as she passes. John comes next, stands with eyes frightened and fists clenched tight. Bob rushes towards him. "Go on in" he tells him, "What are you scared of?" and he gives John a firm shove.

Entering Grade I is an important step in the child's life at school. It not only looks different from nursery school or kindergarten, with its desks and its blackboard, but it *is* different for it is here that the child begins to learn to do those things which will be central in all the rest of his schooling—to deal with life through the use of his mind and to live as a part of a group, rather than mainly as an individual.

Learning to Think

In Grade I the child, for the first time, seriously faces "jobs in thought." His *mind* is now put to work. Hitherto he has been learning largely through play, where he has been able to work out a problem in his own way, but now he must listen to instructions and learn to solve a given problem in a special way. The child is learning the art and skill of thinking. He has already developed some trust in his hands, his legs and his eyes. He knows from past experience what effects he can produce from moulding clay, that his bicycle goes whither he directs it, and that his eyes and fingers work together happily in solving a jigsaw puzzle. Now he must develop confidence in using his mind. It can be frightening for the child when his mind may at first falter, grow tired, do the wrong thing, or even, seemingly, refuse to work. It can also be exciting for him, as he begins to feel his mind at work and to discover what it can do. We hope that he will grow to enjoy his mental efforts.

Because the teacher realizes this is a time of beginnings and change, careful planning and thought are given to program. While the child's work must challenge him, it must not carry him to the pitch of excite-

*Mrs. Warburton is the teacher of Grade I in the Elementary School and also a graduate of The Institute's Diploma Course in Child Study (Option II, Mental Health in the Home).

ment or anxiety, either of which results in tiredness and irritability. Until now, a large part of the child's day has been filled with play, where effort can wax or wane, as need dictates. It is essential to give the child very slowly the steadying pattern of effort which gradually helps him to adapt to mental work. This requires a flexible time table which still fits the needs of the child. In first grade, there are periods of concentration on a given job alternated with play and rest so that the child will adjust with a minimum of uneasiness in this new environment. The "rightness" of the child's program results in his responding and moving forward. Of course, the rate of progress will be very different in different children.

All children need support and the feeling which accompanies successful effort, but another important learning too is that making errors is as usual a part of school life as is learning to correct these errors. When Bob entered first grade, he found it hard to accept the fact that he made mistakes. During the second term, Bob's mother remarked "Bob has certainly changed—he used to fly into terrible temper tantrums when I told him he had done some work wrong. Now, when I tell him he has made a mistake, he corrects it quietly and with no sign of upset." This change had not come suddenly. Bob had been given encouragement and help. He had not been made to feel he had *failed*, but only that he had quite naturally *made an error*, and that people didn't get angry or disappointed because of the error.

Some first-graders feel perfectly comfortable and secure with their classmates, while others may take some time to feel at ease. Comparison or criticism robs the young child of trust in himself and postpones the development of ease with others. There are many ways teachers unintentionally criticize without being aware of it. Too many reminders, or "better" suggestions may make a child feel that he is never quite right. Constantly reminding him that his writing is sloppy or his reading jerky, or inferring that other children are doing better are hardly the ways to build up the child's confidence in his own mind. Such approaches tend to discourage him from trying to think before he has really begun to do so. He may become discouraged and turn his efforts to daydreaming; in this at least he can feel successful.

Learning to Learn in a Group

In first grade the child must accept controls which are new to him and through these develop new powers of self control. If he has been to nursery school or kindergarten, he has learned to follow his teacher's directions, but most of these have been personally directed to himself. Now, throughout much of the day, he must learn to follow instructions which are directed not only to himself but to the whole group. This is

usually a difficult task for the young child and is made easier when simple definite words are used. Six-year-olds may need a little time to leave one task and concentrate on another. Bob appeared at the beginning of term to concentrate only on what he himself wished to do. He was reminded ahead of time that soon it would be listening time. Through being thus prepared, he gradually developed self control in being able to pay attention to new directions.

There is a natural restlessness in first-graders. They wiggle and shuffle and move their hands and feet as they work. Like the small child, they still carry out their efforts with the whole body. But now, in first grade, they will be given practice, little by little, in controlling arms and legs, while the tasks in thought are given attention. Progress will be slow!

There is a definite time during the day when the children have an opportunity to discuss their interests or plan a group project. This is an age when children enjoy discussion. They learn to listen and also to speak. They learn to exchange ideas. They need help, otherwise the social situation makes them excited and silly. Some children want to talk all the time. Other children listen for a long time before they feel that they are ready to contribute.

John was a child who enjoyed listening and for many days made no attempt to speak. It was suggested to him that he would have a turn "one of these days" and that probably he had something to tell the children. Gradually John became encouraged and one day, without suggestion, rose to his feet, rushed to the front of the room and blurted out in a quick voice, "I got my Dad a new tie for his birthday." Regaining his chair, he covered his face with his hands. That was a major effort for John and was the beginning of confidence in himself as one of a group.

The boisterous child, like the voiceless child, needs to be helped to feel a part of the group. As he develops a feeling of belonging, happy relationships are set up which encourage him to try to play his role among the others. He begins to realize that others, too, have privileges. He will learn to wait his turn in answering questions or sharpening pencils. He begins to appreciate the fact that one listens to others, even though they are slow in expressing themselves and sometimes incoherent through eagerness or excitement. In his group living, a six-year-old also learns that people are different; have different thoughts and skills and respond to him in different ways. He discovers different ways of appreciating and responding to other children. He learns to make new friends. He comes to realize he likes some people better than others. He finds that he can get along fairly well with each of the other children in the group. He grows a trust and confidence in the group of which he is a part. But these are not easy

matters to learn and the teacher knows he needs help in accepting and enjoying differences in others and himself. Without her help, he could easily begin to think of the other children of his class as his enemies against whom he must defend and protect himself. Although John is slow in expressing himself, the teacher can help the others to realize that his paintings are filled with new ideas. She can guide Bob, who is aggressive, to become an interesting and original leader in the playground. Restless Ann can be encouraged to use her absorbing interest in flowers and leaves to bring samples to school to share with the children.

Because the children have not lived before in so organized a group, individual differences stand out sharply. The teacher must think of each child with his own idiosyncrasies and develop these, rather than try to press the child into a mould. It is good that the children do exhibit their individuality and express their real feelings, for then the teacher is able to help them. If they hide their fears, concerns, and enthusiasms at this time, they will not grow beyond them. John can be helped to feel that though he is shy and fearful, he has a place of importance, as have the other children. Bob needs help in developing effective and co-operative behaviour; Ann needs the challenge of additional work so that her active mind is busy doing constructive things.

Thus, in first grade, the school has two important tasks. The first is to help children enlarge their capacity to think and interpret. The other is to help the child share himself and his thoughts with the group.

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Les Petits Parlent Français

LINDSAY WELD* and GENEVIEVE DALY**

FRENCH for fives? Foolish? Absurd? *Pas de tout*, says the French teacher, *en verité, c'est parfait!* Certainly French—not only because we in Canada are a bilingual, bicultural people and French a part of our heritage, but also because knowledge of a second language helps expand every man's horizons. And five isn't a bit too early to begin!

For the kindergartener, French is one more thing that's fun in his day. *Bonjour, madame! Comment ça va? Ca va bien? C'est bon!* For the French kindergarten teacher, French is something she brings to the kindergartener with enthusiasm because she herself loves the language and speaks it well and because she enjoys sparking fives with fun and games —in French!

The French teacher in the kindergarten is a French *kindergarten* teacher because she is teaching children first and French second. She knows that kindergarteners are eager to learn—their chronic interest in all aspects of their world is a veritable tonic: *incroyable!*—she is constantly amazed at how quickly they learn and remember French words. The fact that they bring practically no English accent to their learning of French must be sheer joy to a *French* French teacher! She knows that kindergarteners—the same as children of any other age—like fun, and so makes their ten minutes each day ten minutes of fun—in French. They learn French as naturally and as easily as they have learned English, through hearing and speaking it. Words to describe themselves and their very real world of people and things come first and come easily. Games of "point and name" and "hunt and find" follow readily: the teacher or a child may ask, "*Où est la poupée? Charles, prenez-moi la poupée!*" and happily, if knowingly, Charles runs to the doll centre and brings back a dolly with his reply, "*Voici la poupée!*" Games such as this and simple songs with actions, like "*Vous cachez-vous?*" which they acted out and sang in English in nursery school begin the building of a practical vocabulary through fun. A French record once a week familiarizes the children with accents other than the teacher's. Some degree of regularity in program is important to kindergarteners. Something different every day is a good thing but sameness from week to week is reassur-

*Miss Weld is a member of the Research Division and on the editorial staff of the BULLETIN.

**Mrs. Daly was the French teacher of the Elementary School for several years.

ing and, therefore, wise. Kindergarteners like to know what to expect—even in French!

By the time kindergarten children reach Grade I and are on the brink of reading and writing, they are ready and eager for colouring books; that is, books to colour in. *Formidable* to have a French colouring book! and to know that you have your own version of *des oiseaux bleus* on this page and on that *une vache pourpre.*

The introduction of fairly complex card games, stories and skits—*en français, tout le temps!*—is one with the children's progression in age, experience and interest. In the upper elementary grades, the children are able and pleased to play "teacher" themselves, directing the activities of the others in turn. By the time they reach Grade IV, they are talking French with some degree of fluency and are interested to start to read and write it. The French teacher then makes dictation a part of their week's program and knows they will find that fun, too.

"Fun-French" from five is proffered as a fine preparation for formal French at fourteen. The grammar and vocabulary drills, introduced as a part of the high school curriculum, should be taken in easy stride by these children. If fluency in French has been gained through its being one more thing that's fun in their day, the formalities of the language should prove simple to children who have been learning and enjoying learning French for years.

Book Review

Making the Most of Your College Career, Helpful Suggestions for College Students, by KARL S. BERNHARDT, M.A., PH.D., and DAVID K. BERNHARDT. Burns & MacEachern, Toronto, 1956. Pp. 59, $.75.

AT THE INSTITUTE we feel a sort of family pride in this little booklet. It is written by Dr. Karl Bernhardt, our Assistant Director, and his son David, now a university student and once a student of our St. George School.

This father-and-son team has produced a practical and extremely clear manual on how to get your work done and still enjoy college. Its main purpose is to show that college living requires planning and the authors suggest ways and means to budget time, take notes, write exams, and deal with the varied activities of campus life. Their suggestions are not laid down as a sure-fire formula for success, but rather as a blueprint from which the student may make his own plan to serve his own purposes. One supposes that even college students have already learned that "the best-laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft a-gley"!

No student will follow each and every sage suggestion but all readers will find some they can apply with profit. This reviewer, after a great many years of a "college career," was delighted with the idea of a "buffer time," a period set aside each week to do the things one didn't get done when they were supposed to be done!

We give the booklet our best wishes and its authors our congratulations.

MARY L. NORTHWAY

EVENING STUDY GROUPS FOR PARENTS

The Institute of Child Study offers three series of evening study groups for parents:

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Parent Education Office (WA 3–6611, loc. 542)
Institute of Child Study, 45 Walmer Rd., Toronto 4.

BOOK REVIEWS

Crestwood Heights, by JOHN SEELEY, R. ALEXANDER SIM and ELIZABETH LOOSLEY. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1956. Pp. 505, $6.50.

The "Crestwood Heights Project" caught the imagination and enthusiasm of everyone who was interested in mental health. As a part of a National Mental Health Programme, it was launched just after World War II, "somewhere in Central Canada". In this project, a team of investigators entered a "well" community and, in partnership with the people themselves, attempted to assess the mental health assets and, through their mutual effort, to promote more facilities for, and greater understanding of mentally healthful living. The publication of the book, CRESTWOOD HEIGHTS, was, therefore, eagerly awaited.

Many people hoped that the project would lead to new insights into the meaning of community mental health. To them, CRESTWOOD HEIGHTS is a sharp disappointment. Neither in its method, its results, nor its conclusions does it clarify our understanding of community healthfulness.

In method, the study is superficial. The authors themselves state that, "The methods are sufficiently old-fashioned to be reminiscent of earlier work in anthropology" (p.439). The folkways and rituals of "Crestwood Heights" are seen through the eyes of baffled strangers to whom the meaning underlying the tribal customs is hidden. Therefore, the people appear as caricatures rather than as human beings. The cultural data are carefully detailed and extremely interesting to the reader of today who may see himself as others see him, and parts of the book, "Father's Day at the Nursery" and "New Year's Eve Festivities", are amusing reports, but perhaps more suitable for THE NEW YORKER than for a volume on mental health. The book has neither the objectivity of the scientist nor the warm sympathy of the clinician for the community which it attempts to portray.

This superficiality of approach limits the findings of CRESTWOOD HEIGHTS as a mental health document. We are told what these people do, yet not why they do it. Because the observation, or at least the report of it, is superficial, the reader sees "Crestwood Heighters" as living by bread and Cadillacs alone. Deeper investigation

we believe, would show that "Crestwood Heighters", as any human beings, do not, and cannot live only at this level. Mental health, in our opinion, is not a matter of the particular things people do, but rather a matter of the ways in which they do them, and for what purpose. Hanging a Lismer, or putting Christmas cards on the mantel, or indulging in champagne and caviar are, in themselves, no more indicative of good or ill mental health than are hanging an original, throwing Christmas cards in the waste-basket and living on a diet of oatmeal and cheese. A man may hang a Lismer because he genuinely likes it and because it has a very real meaning to him as a Canadian. He may put his Christmas cards on the mantel because they embody relationships with people whom he cares about and appreciates. He may drink champagne not because it is expensive, but because it has become a cultural symbol of an event that has deep human significance. He may enjoy his club, his camp, and his home as places in which human relationships may be enriched and facilitated.

Using an accumulation of cultural evidence, the book's key finding is that the dominating motive of the "Crestwood Heights" community is that of "success--prestige". On the basis of this thesis, the authors conclude that the mental health of this community is extremely "labile" and indeed "fragile". Objective measures used to verify this final conclusion are limited. They include children's results in the California Personality Test and some estimate from which it is concluded that the guidance clinic is overly busy.

Success and prestige may well be prevalent values expressed in this community, as they are expressed elsewhere in present North American culture. Likewise, their obvious presence in our culture may well be a sympton that we carry some inner mental health weakness. However, it would be naive to assume that in these alone we have a measure of the total inner health potentials of ourselves or of any group of people. Such findings do not tell us from what inner sources the people's individual strengths and community sturdiness grow. Until we are capable of measuring and of balancing underlying assets, as well as liabilities, no true estimate of mental health status is possible.

Could there be other conclusions?

From the data presented in the book itself, would we be justified in drawing conclusions other than those presented by the authors? We ourselves would ask, "Does the

fact that the clinic is busily occupied by people who had been encouraged and enlightened to appreciate the value of such facilities indicate their mental healthiness?"

Descriptions are given of parents' care and concern for their children and their desire to establish good homes; schools that are continually devoted to the betterment of the welfare of pupils; community organization and participation in various causes (including this project itself). Do these not indicate mental healthfulness? People prepared to welcome a team of researchers into their midst; people who are facing the problems of postwar rehabilitation and those of a swiftly changing culture; people who are willing to recognize the conflict between success and material values and are attempting to evolve a solution; these are the people of "Crestwood Heights". Can all such statements be stacked up as evidence of mental weakness? Can whatever appears as healthiness be presented as a sort of deceptive apparition?

During the years of the project, much more data than are given in this book must have been collected. Indeed we are told that five books in all are planned. It would be interesting if another report could be written, using the data on file to support the thesis that these people express a high degree of mental healthiness in their living and to illustrate the ways in which they do so.

We believe that the real value of the book is that it raises the whole question of what we mean by mental health. Many definitions have been given of mental illness; few of mental health. Long before the psychologists told us, we realized that human beings are frail and faltering people; we know that we are considerably lower than the angels. Yet, if we look squarely at our humanity, we see we are not nearly as bad nor as weak as modern psychology has led us to suppose. In this age of psychological introspection, have we not come to doubt those threads of strength and goodness that are seen every day as a very real part of us? We have grown accustomed to interpreting our generosity as pretentiousness; our kindliness as striving for position; our effort towards honourable causes as a sublimation of some unsatisfied need. We have become afraid to be ourselves and we have forgotten, in our willingness to admit that we are lower than the angels, that we still have visions of them. Ideals are considered to be only for the adolescent and integrity a matter to be mentioned only in commencement addresses. Our greatest fault is that through our psychological theorizing, we

have learned not merely to debunk others but also to debunk ourselves.

The human scientist must look at people with his own two eyes to observe and record incidence of courage as fully as he has been able to record evidence of complexes; to see harmony as clearly as hostility; affection as definitely as affectation. Much as he needs new instruments, the human scientist needs a new viewpoint even more. To study mental health, he must be able to understand the strengths by which people live; the potentialities they possess; and the assets, both psychological and material, that they are willing to devote to building a community fit for the expression of human personality.

Mental health means going forward into situations of perplexity; the richer the environment, the more (not the fewer) perplexities it will present. The mentally healthy person may often be bewildered, but rarely baffled; sometimes solitary, but never isolated. He meets life with fortitude, though not with fearlessness, and he follows the folkways of his peculiar culture, not because he fears to violate them, but because he sees them as bonds that harmonize the community of which he is a part and in which he serves.

In the future, we will become more capable of observing and defining such evidences of mental healthfulness. At that time, we will eagerly await a new book, CRESTWOOD HEIGHTS REVISITED.

M. L. Northway
and
D. A. Millichamp

MOBILIZING COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR MALADJUSTED AND DELINQUENT YOUTH

by PAUL H. BOWMAN, ROBERT F. DE HAAN, GORDON LIDDLE, *and* JACK KOUGH, *The Committee on Human Development, University of Chicago*

This is the third in a series of progress reports describing the first half of a ten-year project studying and aiding maladjusted children in a selected city of 50,000 population. The typical child population of the community is described here in terms of social classes, family status, levels of ability, and problems of maladjustment. The authors suggest how potentially maladjusted children may be identified and report on the remedial procedures that have been developed and used with children. This is a volume for everyone seriously interested in problems of mental health, delinquency, education, and community development. *Supplementary Educational Monograph No. 85. 128 pages. $2.50*

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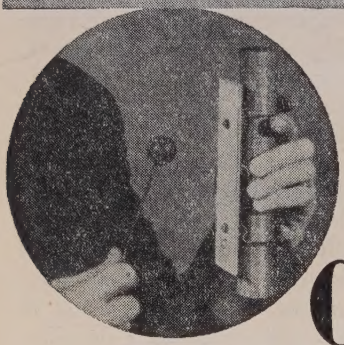

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